

December 26, 2006

MEMORANDUM TO: Luis A. Reyes
Executive Director for Operations

FROM: Stephen D. Dingbaum **/RA/**
Assistant Inspector General for Audits

SUBJECT: STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS: AUDIT OF NRC'S
OFFICE OF NUCLEAR SECURITY AND INCIDENT
RESPONSE (OIG-06-A-09)

REFERENCE: DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF NUCLEAR SECURITY AND
INCIDENT RESPONSE October 30, 2006

Attached is the Office of the Inspector General's analysis and status of recommendations 1 through 6, as discussed in the agency's response dated October 30, 2006. Based on this status update, all of the recommendations continue to be resolved pending the receipt and review of the completed actions as discussed. Please provide an update on all the recommendations by May 31, 2007. In that response, please describe the completed actions and include supporting documentation needed to close the recommendations.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call me at 415-5915.

Attachment: As stated

cc: M. Johnson, OEDO
M. Malloy, OEDO
P. Tressler, OEDO

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Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Establish a means of assessing the current workload and prioritizing assignments, including but not limited to emergent work, as they are received, so they can be incorporated into the workload without overextending NSIR's resources.

Response Dated
October 30, 2006:

The Work Planning and Management Initiative Group (WPMIG) initiated several activities to address workload management in NSIR by focusing on those issues raised in the OIG audit and the Safety Culture Survey and other evaluations that identified concerns with: (1) the high volume of emergent work, (2) the lack of procedures or work practices, (3) inconsistent implementation and prioritization of work; and (4) the need for a process for planning and expectations, coordination and alignment. The outcome of these activities will result in a Comprehensive Business Process that will inform the NSIR budget process and operating plan, improve office-wide understanding of, instructions for, and better adherence to office management of action items, and provide an effective, timely, and responsive system for communicating action items to NSIR staff. NSIR remains on target to complete this Comprehensive Business Process no later than May 2007.

OIG Analysis: The proposed corrective actions address the intent of OIG's recommendation. OIG will close this recommendation upon the completion of the planned actions and OIG's review of the comprehensive Business Process and other enhancements.

Status: Resolved.

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Recommendation 2: Review the Emergent Work Process to ensure emergent work is accurately documented to assist with workforce and budget decisions.

Response Dated
October 30, 2006:

To better document and manage unbudgeted work, the WPMIG has recommended that the office utilize the new Electronic Document and Action Tracking System (EDATS), currently being used in the Office of Executive Director for Operations and in NSIR on a pilot basis. Originally, the WPMIG planned to modify the existing NSIR action item tracking system that documents and tracks all office level work assignments, both budgeted and unbudgeted. However, when the WPMIG recognized the capabilities of EDATS, the plan to modify the NSIR tracking system was halted. NSIR has now focused its efforts on integrating EDATS into its overall work planning management system and expects to fully implement this integrated solution in NSIR by May 2007. This will allow for appropriate development of internal work flows and processes and mapping of this information into EDATS. It will also allow for certification and accreditation of EDATS, currently in process by OEDO and OIS.

OIG Analysis:

The proposed corrective actions address the intent of OIG's recommendation. The recommendation will be closed upon OIG's review of the procedures and processes resulting from the improvements identified and implemented by the Workload Planning and Management group.

Status:

Resolved.

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Recommendation 3: Develop an emergent work log that is user-friendly and records the required information on the impact of emergent work on NSIR planned/budgeted assignments.

Response Dated
October 30, 2006:

Principal work, both budgeted and unbudgeted, is recorded in the NSIR work tracking system. The current emergent workload has declined to the point that the use of the emergent work log has been discontinued. As indicated in response to recommendation two above, the adoption of EDATS will help facilitate improvements in the management of both planned and unplanned work. The full implementation of EDATS (including the work planning component) is scheduled for May 2007.

OIG Analysis:

The proposed corrective actions address the intent of OIG's recommendation. OIG will review the findings of the Workload Planning and Management group and its determination of the further need for an emergent work log review and the recommendation will be closed based on the assessment of the findings.

Status:

Resolved.

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Recommendation 4: Establish and implement policies and procedures for communications between NSIR and internal and external stakeholders.

Response Dated
October 30, 2006:

The Communications Group has developed a draft NSIR office procedure, "Communications Policy and Procedure" to provide NSIR staff with the established communication policy of the office and those communication practices available to enhance the flow of information up, down, and across the various branches and divisions within the office and with stakeholders external to the office. The procedure is designed to maintain open lines of communication between management and staff, and aims to be an effective tool to maintain and improve lines of communication among staff and internal and external stakeholders. NSIR is committed to enabling effective communications between management, staff, and internal and external stakeholders in support of NSIR's mission to prevent nuclear security incidents and prepare for and respond to safety and security events. NSIR's communication practices strive to enhance organizational performance in order to achieve its vision of being a valued partner in homeland security and Federal emergency preparedness and response. The procedure will be rolled out at upcoming division and branch meetings over the next several months, and at the next All Hands NSIR Staff meeting.

The draft procedure includes an internal and external NSIR roadmap, an internal and external matrix of NSIR stakeholders, an NSIR Communications Handbook, and a guide for meeting protocol. The internal roadmap establishes a centralized plan and toolbox for NSIR staff to use in accomplishing office-wide communication goals. The roadmap will enhance top-to-bottom, bottom-up, and peer-to-peer communication within Headquarters and with the Regions. The external roadmap establishes a centralized plan and toolbox for NSIR staff to use in accomplishing office-wide external communication goals. It will enhance communication with external stakeholders by: (1)

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identifying barriers to good communication, (2) understanding and improving patterns of communication, (3) developing strategies to resolve the barriers and provide tools to individuals to become better communicators, and (4) increasing awareness of NSIR programs. The internal and external matrices of NSIR stakeholders specify the approaches and tools currently utilized for communicating with all stakeholders. Throughout this effort, best practices were shared across the NSIR divisions.

The NSIR Communications Handbook, originally developed and distributed in 2005, is a reference for staff and management on best practices for effective communications. The meeting protocol guide was established and implemented to provide NSIR management and staff with a set of tools and guidelines designed to make internal meetings more efficient and effective.

While substantial progress has been made in developing appropriate policies and processes, some additional review and finalization of this overall office procedure is necessary. It is expected that this procedure will be completed by January 2007.

OIG Analysis: The proposed corrective actions address the intent of OIG's recommendation. OIG will close this recommendation upon a review of the policies and procedures developed by the Communications Group and implemented by NSIR management.

Status: Resolved.

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Recommendation 5: Establish and implement a method to measure the level of effective communications.

Response Dated
October 30, 2006:

A method to measure the level of effective communications was established by developing communications metrics into the NSIR/Division of Preparedness and Responses (DPR) Operating Plan for FY 2007. The performance objectives for these metrics involve developing and maintaining a standardized outreach program, and enhancing internal and external stakeholder outreach. NSIR will implement these metrics for the DPR during FY2007. NSIR will evaluate the utility of these measures after a one-year period and determine whether or not they should be expanded to the security divisions in FY 2008.

OIG Analysis:

The proposed corrective actions address the intent of OIG's recommendation. OIG will assess the metrics developed by the Communications group for use in the NSIR Operating Plan to ensure the metrics provide for an effective measure of communications.

Status: Resolved.

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Recommendation 6: Assess the recommendations from 2003 office assessment to determine their applicability and implement those that would benefit NSIR today.

Response Dated
October 30, 2006:

NSIR has continued to address some of the remaining action items from prior assessments, surveys, etc. Information on the status of the Communications and Workload Planning and Management Initiative areas have been provided in our status updates for Recommendations 1-5. A summary of progress for the initiative areas relating to staffing and budget and roles and responsibilities is provided below:

Roles and Responsibilities Initiative

As a result of prior surveys and assessments, this team focused its initial efforts on first line supervisor roles and responsibilities. The team has since developed a set of elements and standards and an appraisal process that better aligns with management expectations for its first line supervisors. The new elements (closely aligned with the SES performance elements) are as follows: Change Management, Leading People, Results Driven, Business Acumen, and Building Coalitions/ Communications. The draft performance plan for NSIR branch chiefs has been reviewed by OHR and will be put into effect for FY2007.

This team also has revised the NSIR Mission and Vision statements to incorporate the emergency preparedness functions that were added to the office subsequent to the development of the original mission and vision statements. To assist employees in better understanding their individual roles/responsibilities, NSIR is working with the Office of Human Resources (OHR), to provide all employees copies of their official position descriptions (PDs). NSIR expects OHR to provide copies of these PDs to NSIR no later than February 2007.

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The roles and responsibilities' team is now focusing on the development of a comprehensive set of organizational roles and responsibilities for the office. The intent of this document is to provide employees with a clear understanding of the specific activities across all of the branches within NSIR. The team expects to complete this activity by May 2007.

Staffing and Budget Development Initiative

The Staffing and Budget Development team addressed four objectives that were judged to be achievable within a one-year time frame: (1) clarify the vision for entry level, intermediate and specialist training and recommend actions to achieve goals; (2) identify the infrastructure needs for NSIR staff and recommend actions to provide a process to support such infrastructure within a one-year time frame; (3) define metrics for NSIR hiring and identify and recommend changes to NSIR/HR/ADM processes to achieve full staffing of FTEs with requisite skills; and (4) develop the processes and procedures to provide first-level supervisors with information on budgets and budget execution on a timely basis and in a format for first -level decision-making and tracking.

A status of the team's progress in meeting the four objectives is described below:

NSIR has undertaken an ambitious project to identify skills and training for entry-level, intermediate and specialist training across the NSIR technical divisions. The subgroup received input from all NSIR technical branches, developed recommendations by discipline/grade for the requisite qualifications and the recommended professional development paths, including training.

These activities have been coordinated with the Nuclear Safety Professional Development Program (NSPDP) program.

Ultimately, the professional development training recommendations will be issued as an NSIR Office Procedure. This procedure will be completed by March 2007.

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- NSIR training procedures for security inspectors will be updated to reflect the new training courses as they are developed. Completion of this activity is linked to when the Human Resources Training and Development Center establishes these courses. The proposed training recommendations and associated course work will be integrated into the NSIR Office Procedure as noted above.
- NSIR conducted a survey of its first-level supervisors to identify short-term IT infrastructure needs. Telecommunications options were reviewed and implemented. Printer and reproduction services needs were identified and solutions recommended. These recommendations will be implemented once the third and fourth floor construction efforts are completed in the second quarter of FY2007.
- A Service Level Agreement (SLA) was successfully implemented among NSIR, HR and ADM relating to merit staffing and security clearance processing. The SLA identifies expectations and time frames for various components of the hiring process. The SLA was posted on the NSIR intranet to allow quick reference by NSIR staff and managers. As a result of collaborative efforts among OHR, NSIR and ADM, NSIR has now reached its FY07 FTE allotment.
- NSIR has successfully migrated its Human Capital data and reporting from word processing/spreadsheet files and various paper files to a comprehensive database. Using this single database, NSIR can now generate a computerized staffing plan report that contains current staffing/budgeting information, including FTEs allocated, FTEs budgeted, and FTE utilization by organizational unit. A computerized vacancy report will be rolled-out by the end of the year. These processes/reports complete the efforts to provide first-line supervisors with budgets and budget execution information.

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OIG Analysis: The proposed corrective actions address the intent of OIG's recommendation. OIG will review and assess the actions implemented as a result of the four identified initiatives. The recommendation will be closed upon the completion of the assessed actions.

Status: Resolved.